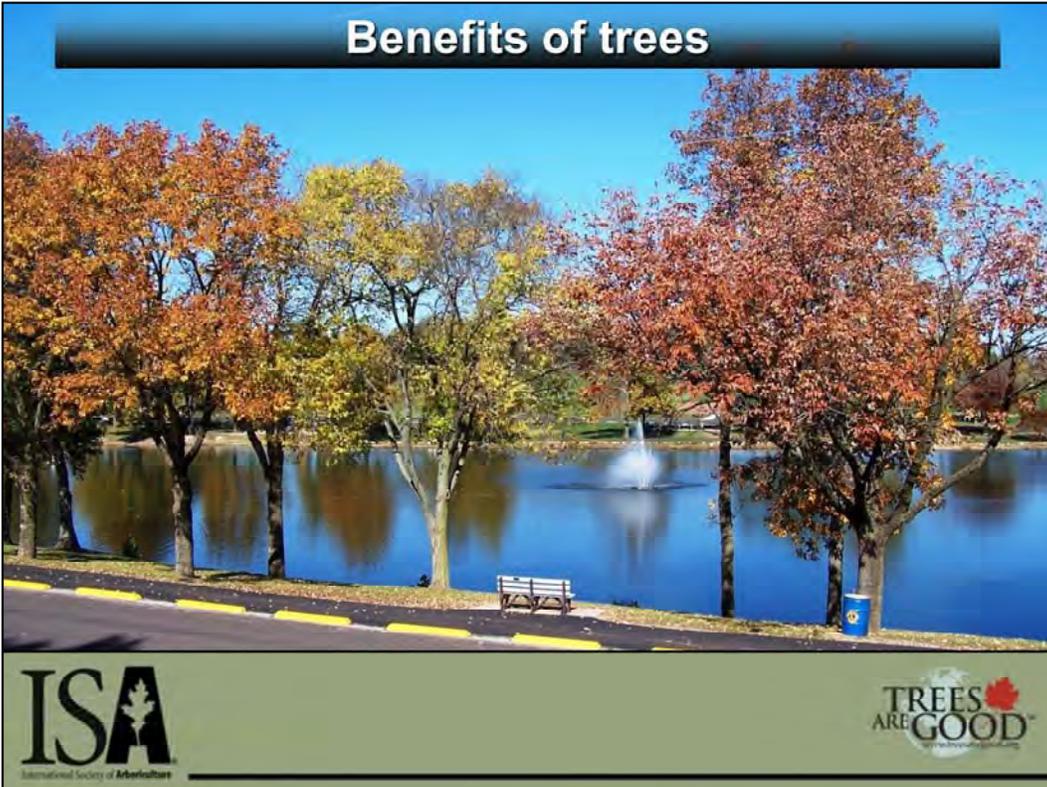


Trees provide a long-lasting source of beauty and enjoyment for people of all ages. How well your tree grows depends on the care you provide when the tree is planted, and the follow-up care the tree receives after planting.

This presentation will help you learn how to care for your tree, so that it can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Benefits of trees



Trees provide us with many social, community, environmental, and economic benefits. Think of tree care as an investment.

Healthy trees increase in value with age and pay big dividends by increasing property values, beautifying our surroundings, purifying our air, and saving energy by providing cooling shade from the summer's heat and protection from the winter's wind.

Properly caring for your tree will maximize these benefits.



The longer your tree lives, the longer you are able to enjoy all of the benefits your tree can provide.

Proper and timely tree care will increase the life span of your tree and will maximize all the benefits trees provide for generations to come.

A well-cared-for tree is attractive and can add considerable value to your property. A poorly maintained tree is unattractive and can become a significant liability. Beauty can be enhanced and safety concerns can be reduced when a tree receives proper and timely care.



The age of your tree will determine the type of maintenance that is required. Trees can be grouped into three categories based on age:

Young – trees that have not reached their full growth potential and are not yet able to reproduce. High growth rates.

Mature – trees that have reached all or most of their full growth potential and are able to reproduce. Growth rate is reduced.

Senescing or senior – trees that have stopped growth and development and may or may not be in decline as a result of age.



A newly-planted tree or a small-caliper tree, that has been planted for less than 3 to 5 years, can be considered a young tree. A young tree that has been recently planted is still establishing its root system and adjusting to its new site, and requires a different level of care.

Proper care of your young, newly-planted tree will speed up root establishment and help it grow to its full potential.



Proper watering and mulching are needed to get young, newly planted trees off to a good start. Newly planted trees can be vulnerable to stress until they become established in the landscape. A young tree must be watered regularly during its first few years. The soil should be moist to a depth of 12 inches (0.3 m) below the soil surface. Slow, deep watering once a week is preferred over fast, shallow watering.

Applying mulch will keep the soil moist and cool, and will protect its trunk from mower damage. Apply mulch around your tree with a layer no more than 2-4 inches (5 to 10 cm) in depth of organic mulch. Make sure the mulch layer extends outward to at least the tree's drip line (extent of the canopy). Avoid building a "volcano" of mulch around your tree. Mulch should never be piled close to the tree's trunk as this can cause the trunk to decay, and it provides habitat for diseases, fungi, insects, and small mammals. The mulch ring should have a thin layer and be as wide as practical.



Careful consideration should be given before you fertilize or prune a young tree.

Fertilization is not recommended at the time of planting. After the third growing season, a slow-release fertilizer can be applied if the soil has nutrient deficiencies. A Certified Arborist can sample the soil around the tree, verify if there are any nutrient deficiencies, and recommend the best way to correct it.

Pruning newly planted trees should be avoided until the tree is established in the landscape. Remove only dead, dying, or broken limbs and prune lightly to remove crossing or rubbing branches. Remember that newly planted trees need as much of their canopy as possible to produce the food and energy necessary to establish their root systems quickly.



Proper pruning is essential in developing a tree with a strong structure and desirable form. Pruning young trees to establish good form and structure can start after the first growing season and/or after the tree has recovered from transplant shock [the arborist giving the presentation should explain what 'transplant shock' means].

Trees that receive appropriate pruning while they are still young will require little corrective pruning when they mature.

The goals of young tree training are to develop a central leader, well spaced scaffold branches, and a strong trunk.



A mature tree is one that has reached all or most of its full growth potential and has started producing fruits and/or flowers (cones). A mature tree should not be confused with senescing trees. 'Veteran' or senescing trees are nearing the end of their life span, whereas mature trees will still devote energy for growth and development.



Watering a mature tree is usually only necessary during unexpected drought conditions. During this time the tree should be watered once a week. The amount of water needed depends on the tree's size. Generally, it is best to use ten gallons (38 liters) of water per inch (2.54 cm) of trunk diameter for each watering. Again, slow, deep watering is preferred to fast, shallow watering.

Organic mulches moderate soil temperature, retain moisture, reduce soil compaction, and keep weeds and grass away. But most important, mulch keeps lawnmowers away from the trunk.

A soil test or consultation with a Certified Arborist will help determine if fertilizing is necessary. Fertilizing can improve growth; however, if it is not necessary or applied correctly, it may not benefit the tree at all and may even adversely affect plant health.

Pruning mature trees is done to remove broken, dead, and/or diseased branches. Ideally, large-diameter branches should not be removed. Mature trees have a hard time compartmentalizing (closing) large wounds and these may become an entry point for disease and/or decay.

Senescing (veteran) trees



A senescing or **veteran** tree is an old tree that has reached the upper limits of its lifespan and is not adding significant height or crown spread each growing season. The vitality and survival of a veteran tree can be dramatically affected by changes to its site conditions. Too much or too little of anything can stress these senior citizens of the urban forest.



Senescing (veteran) trees require watering and mulching just as they have all of their lives. However, a senior tree cannot tolerate the same level of fertilizing and pruning as a mature tree. These tasks should be performed with careful consideration and after consultation with a Certified Arborist.

If a veteran tree has sentimental or historic value, protection and support systems such as cabling and bracing, and lightning protection can be installed by Certified Arborists.

Veteran trees should be inspected at least annually for signs of decline or failure, insect and disease problems, and nutrient deficiencies.

Over time, the soil around veteran trees can become compacted by foot and mower traffic. To help avoid compaction and to maintain a vigorous root system, a wide mulch layer should be applied. If compaction is already a problem, arborists can use special techniques, such as soil aeration, to increase water and air movement in the soil.



Regardless the age or stage of life of your tree, there are additional maintenance tasks you can perform to keep your tree structurally sound, vigorous, and attractive.

Some pests/disorders merely cause temporary, cosmetic problems and may not need treatment. A Certified Arborist can help you decide whether treatment is necessary (such as Dutch elm disease, emerald ash borer, and oak wilt) or if your tree will recover without damage.

Mechanical and mower damage to trunks and roots can lead to severe decay and the death of trees. This is easily prevented through mulching by keeping lawn-care equipment away from the trunks and exposed roots of your tree.

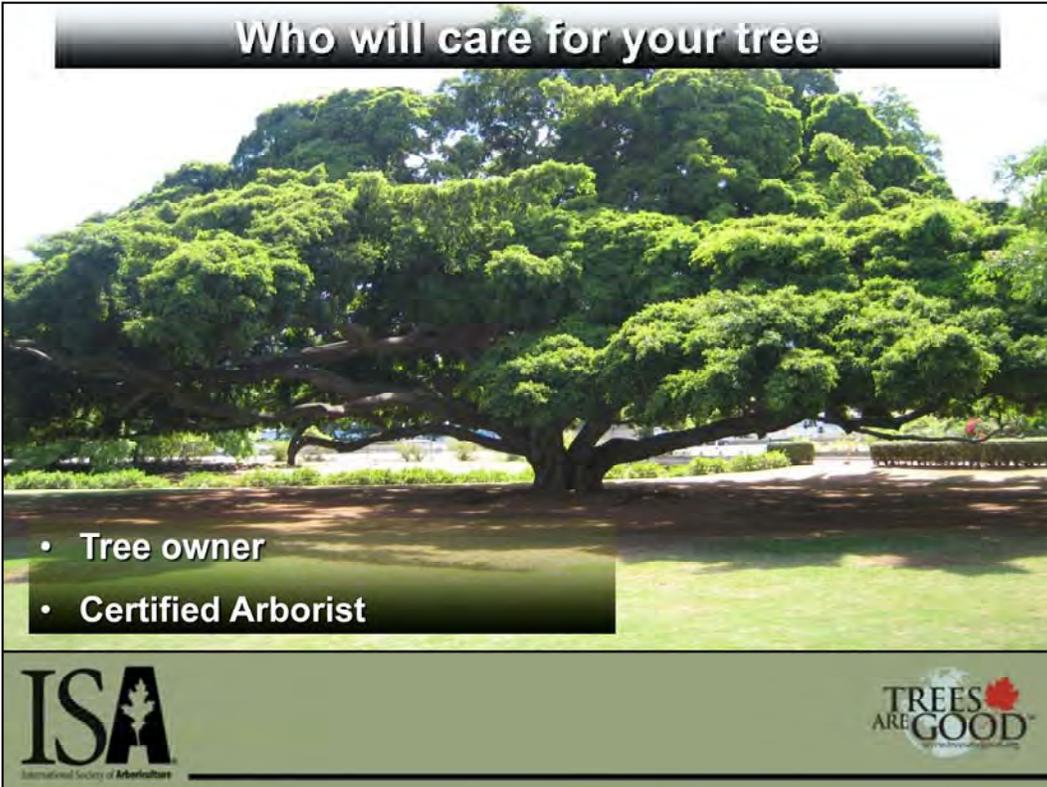


Construction damage comes in many forms: damaged or severed roots from trenching and grading, broken branches from construction equipment, soil contamination from stored materials and chemicals, and soil compaction.

Generally, the most damaging impact of construction comes from soil compaction on the tree's root zone. Heavy construction equipment compacts soil, making it difficult for tree roots to take up water and grow.

Once the soil is compacted it is very difficult and costly to correct the problem. However, soil compaction can be avoided by placing temporary construction fencing around the drip line of trees. This will protect the tree by preventing equipment from driving over the root zone. If trees are not protected from construction activities, they may never recover from the construction damage.

Who will care for your tree

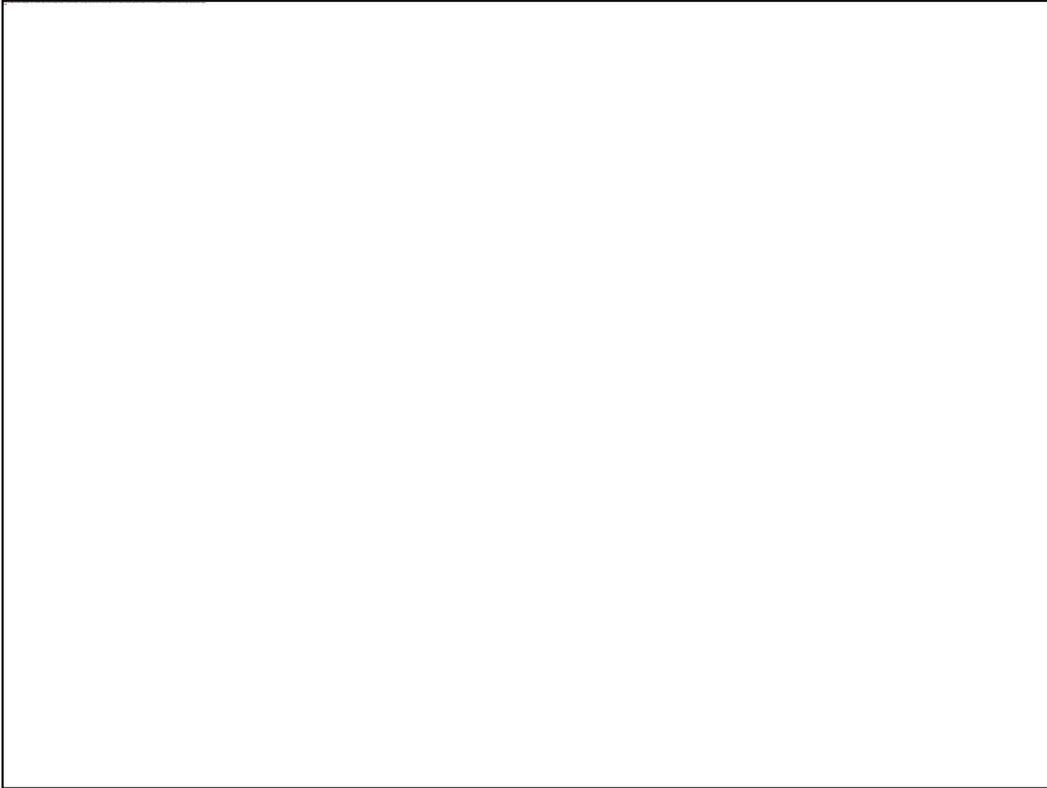


For a long and healthy life, trees need proper maintenance. There are some things that you can do yourself to care for your tree, but there are other times when a Certified Arborist should be contacted. Certified Arborists are experts in the techniques and practices involved in the care of trees.



Knowledgeable tree owners can provide basic tree care, such as watering, mulching, and young tree pruning. Tree owners should monitor their trees often in order to spot the first signs of stress or decline. Examples include wilting foliage, abnormal leaf discoloration and drop, and branch dieback [arborist should explain this concept to the audience].

When anything out of the ordinary is observed, you should consult with a Certified Arborist as soon as possible. Usually, the sooner the tree is diagnosed, the higher is the chance of recovery.



If you are uncertain as to what should be done, contact a Certified Arborist. An arborist is a specialist in the care of trees. Arborists are knowledgeable about the needs of trees and are trained and equipped to provide proper care.

Pruning or removing trees, especially large trees, is a dangerous work and should be done by professionals that possess the necessary equipment and training. Tree work should be done only by those trained and equipped to work safely in trees. Always ask for the ISA certification, references, and proof of insurance to increase the chances of hiring reputable and ethical individuals that can provide you with high-quality tree care.

Protect, preserve, and be proud
of your tree



Trees define our homes and communities. We should protect, preserve, and be proud of our trees.

Trees are valuable assets that should be maintained to increase their value and functions over time.

Caring for your tree, whether it is young, mature, or veteran, will ensure its health and beauty for generations to come.

To learn more about
how to care for your tree...

...visit us at:

www.treesaregood.org

International Society of Arboriculture



Now that you have a basic understanding of how to care for your tree, you can too can help your community forest grow!